

AN  
APPEAL  
TO THE  
FRIENDS OF RELIGION  
AND  
LITERATURE  
IN FURAVF OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF  
UPPER CANADA.

JOHN STRACHAN, D.D.

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AN

# APPEAL

TO THE

FRIENDS OF RELIGION AND LITERATURE,

IN BEHALF OF THE

## University

OF

## UPPER CANADA.

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BY

JOHN STRACHAN, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF YORK, UPPER CANADA.

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THE present state of education in the province of Upper Canada consists of common schools throughout the different townships or parishes established under various acts of the Colonial Legislature, which are placed on a most excellent footing, and require no other improvement than the means of multiplying their number, which will be no doubt granted as the revenue becomes more productive.

In about three hundred and forty common schools established in the different districts of Upper Canada, from seven to eight thousand children are taught reading and writing, the elements of arithmetic, and the first principles of religion; and when it is considered that the parents commonly send their children in rotation, the younger in summer when the roads are good, and the elder in winter, it is not too much to say that nearly double this number, or from twelve to fourteen thousand children profit annually by the common schools. The consequence is, that the people scattered as they are over a vast wilderness, are becoming alive to the great advantage of educating their children, and are seconding with laudable zeal the exertions of the Legislature; insomuch so, that the schools supported

by subscription are more in number than those established by law.

Provision is made by statute for the translation of some of the more promising scholars from the common to the District Schools where the Classics and practical Mathematics are taught. In these schools, eleven in number, there are at present upwards of three hundred young men acquiring an education to qualify them for the different professions; and although they can seldom support above one master, several young gentlemen, who have been brought up in them, are now eminent in their professions, and would by their talents and high principles do credit to seminaries of greater name.

But the time has arrived when the District Schools will become still more useful by confining them to the intention of their first establishment, namely, nurseries for an University, an institution now called for by the increased population and circumstances of the colony, and most earnestly desired by the more respectable inhabitants. There is not in either Province any English Seminary above the rank of a good school at which a liberal education can be obtained. Thus the youth of three hundred thousand Englishmen have no opportunity of receiving instruction within the Canadas, in Law, Medicine, or Divinity.

The consequence is, that many young men coming forward to the learned professions are obliged to look beyond the Province for the last two or three



years of their education, undoubtedly the most important and critical period of their whole lives. Very few are able, on account of the great expence, to proceed to England or Scotland, and the distance is so great, and the difficulties so many, that parental anxiety reluctantly trusts children so far from its observation and control. The youth are, therefore, in some degree, compelled to look towards the United States, where the means of education, though of a description far inferior to those of Great Britain, are yet superior to any thing within the Province, and a growing necessity is arising of sending them to finish their education in that country. Now in the United States a custom prevails unknown to or unpractised by any other nation ; in all other countries morals and religion are made the basis of public instruction, and the first books put into the hands of children teach them the domestic, the social, and religious virtues ; but in the United States politics pervade the whole system of education ; the school books from the very first elements are stuffed with praises of their own institutions and breathe hatred to every thing English.

To such a country our youth may go strongly attached to their native land and to all its establishments, but by hearing them continually depreciated and those of America praised, this attachment will in many be gradually weakened ; and some may become fascinated with that liberty which has degenerated into licentiousness, and imbibe, perhaps un-

consciously, sentiments unfriendly to things of which Englishmen are proud.

It is indeed easy to perceive the danger of sending our most prominent youth to a country to finish their education where they hear nothing in praise of their native land and where every thing bespeaks hatred and defiance, where her merits are accounted defects, and all her virtues and glories soiled by the poison of calumny. Nor can it be expected that any of them on their return will give up their hearts and affections to their Parent State with the same cordiality that they would have done had they been carefully nurtured within the British Dominions. What indeed can be more important to the true prosperity of the Province, than the careful education of its youth? In what other way can we ever obtain a well-instructed population by which to preserve our excellent constitution and our connexion with the British Empire, and give that respectable character to the country which arises from an intelligent magistracy and from having public situations filled by men of ability and information.

What has been already done to effect this purpose is highly creditable to the Province, the two primary steps have been taken, and the third which is the most important is opposed by no serious impediments.

The establishment of an University at the seat of Government will complete a system of education in Upper Canada from the letters of the alphabet

to the most profound investigations of science,—a system which will be intimately connected in all its branches. Already the common schools are connected with the District Schools, as they may send up a certain number of boys to be instructed gratis; and the District Schools may be connected with the University by means of Scholarships to increase in number as the revenues of the University shall admit, either by the sale of lands appropriated for its endowment, or grants from the Provincial Legislature; and the University itself might in time become connected with Oxford and Cambridge in England, by possessing some exhibitions at each for the benefit of its more promising sons. In this manner the door to a liberal education would be opened to all the inhabitants, and the children of the farmer and mechanic might be found deservedly filling the highest offices of the Colony to which they had arisen by their superior talents, fostered by the benevolent institutions of the Province, and Upper Canada might boast a plan of public instruction rarely equalled, and not surpassed by any in the world.

This establishment, by collecting all the promising youth of the colony into one place, would gradually give a new tone to public sentiments and feelings; and should any portion of the people cherish a leaning towards our neighbours, it would be removed or checked by means not in their nature violent, but on the contrary, producing the most beneficial effects through the whole Province. It is indeed quite

evident that the consequences of an University established even on a very moderate scale, but possessing sufficient recommendations to attract to it the sons of the most opulent families, would soon be visible in the greater intelligence and more confirmed principles of loyalty of those who would be called to the various public duties required in the country. Nor is the number small that are thus called upon to fill the stations of magistrates, legislators, and the ranks of the different learned professions.

There are, it is believed, at present between forty and fifty young gentlemen in the Province studying the profession of the Law, a profession which must in a country like this be the repository of the highest talents. Lawyers must, from the very nature of our political institutions, from there being no great land-proprietors, no privileged orders, become the most powerful profession, and must in time possess more influence and authority than any other. They are emphatically our men of business and will gradually engross all the Colonial offices of profit and honour. Is it not therefore of the utmost importance that they should be collected together at the University, become acquainted with each other, and familiar with similar views and modes of thinking, and be taught from precept and example to venerate and love our Parent State? It is surely of great consequence that a class of intelligent men belonging to a profession which offers the highest induce-

ments of reputation, wealth, influence, authority, and power, should be attached by sentiment and feeling to the British Empire.

In regard to the profession of Medicine now becoming of great importance in the Province, it is melancholy to think that three-fourths of the present practitioners have been educated or attended Lectures in the United States, and it is to be presumed that many of them are inclined towards that country. But in Upper Canada there is no provision whatever for attaining medical knowledge, and those that make choice of that profession must go to a foreign country to acquire it.

There are only twenty-four Clergymen in Upper Canada, the greater number from England, the remainder natives. Now unless we can get respectable Clergymen from England, it is essential that the young men coming forward to the Church should be educated entirely within the Province, but for this there is no sort of provision. It is true the few Clergymen born in the country have been hitherto educated by their elder brethren, and the result has been the most satisfactory, for in some respects they have the advantage over their brethren from England, they are better acquainted with the people and can address them with more effect, and as they bring over to the Church their friends and relations, the power and influence of the Establishment are increased. But the wants of the Province are becoming great, and however much disposed

the elder Clergy may be to bring forward young men to the sacred profession, they have neither leisure nor the means of doing it with proper effect ; there can be nothing of that zeal, of that union and mutual attachment, of that deep theological and literary enquiry and anxiety to excel, which would be found among young men collected at the University.

Nothing can be more manifest than that Upper Canada has not yet felt the advantage of a religious establishment. What can twenty-four clergymen do scattered over a country of nearly six hundred miles in length ? Can we be surprised that under such circumstances the religious benefits of a church establishment are unknown, and that sectaries of all descriptions have increased ? And when it is farther considered that the religious teachers of all other Protestant denominations, a very few respectable ministers of the church of Scotland excepted, come from the republican states of America, where they gather their knowledge and form their sentiments ; it is evident that if the imperial government does not step forward with efficient help, the mass of the population will be gradually nurtured and instructed in hostility to our institutions, both civil and religious.

Were the young men destined for these professions or any other liberal pursuits to have their minds formed at an University, they would certainly compose a body continually increasing, which in union,

respectability, and strength, would overmatch any tendency to disaffection that might appear, and gradually produce a tone and feeling through the province altogether British.

The Noble Lord at the head of the colonial department, who has through life been the strenuous and upright friend of religion, and the liberal promoter of every measure that had a tendency to advance the true prosperity of the colonies, having taken these circumstances into consideration, has not only commanded in his Majesty's name a royal charter to issue establishing an University in Upper Canada, which shall have and enjoy all such and the like privileges as are enjoyed by the Universities of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and has declared it to be the munificent intention of our Beloved Sovereign to grant a sum of money for the purpose of erecting the necessary buildings, and to confer such an endowment as shall in a few years place the institution in full and active operation. His Majesty's Government having thus done all and even more than could have been expected, nothing would remain but patiently to wait till the endowment yielded the means of commencing the business of instruction; were not the wants of the province so urgent that the delay of five or six years, which must elapse before the University under present circumstances can be put in activity, may be attended with evil consequences, which may never be retrieved. Under this appre-

hension I am induced to appeal to the friends of religion that we may be enabled immediately to collect around us the youth of Canada for the purpose of instruction. Already has the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, sensible of the urgency of the case, granted 500*l.* towards purchasing a library, and an equal or greater donation is confidently expected from the sister Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

It is chiefly on religious grounds that this appeal for the University of Upper Canada is made, which, while it offers its benefits to the whole population, will, for a century to come, from the peculiar circumstances of the country, be essentially a Missionary College; and the number of clergymen which it will be called upon to furnish will be more than double what any other profession can require.

*Table of the Religious State of Upper Canada as it respects the Established Church.*

Districts.	Length.	Breadth.	Square Miles.	No. Townships or Parishes in each district.	Population.	Clergy-men.	Additional clergymen required.
Eastern	57	24	1368	12	20,000	2	13
Ottawa	63	24	1512	11	3,500	0	3
Johnston	54	36	1944	18	20,600	3	12
Bathurst	45	39	1755	19	12,000	2	6
Midland	63	54	3402	35	35,500	5	17
Newcastle	63	48	3024	26	13,000	2	7
Home	73	63	4599	51	23,000	1	14
Gore	48	45	2160	17	18,000	2	10
Niagara	56	36	2016	17	24,000	4	12
London	81	48	3888	33	22,000	1	14
Western	72	36	2592	21	9,000	2	4
Total	675	453	28,260	260	200,000	24	112



This table in respect to its measurements having been compiled from a map, is not given as fractionally exact, but will be found in all its parts substantially correct. Assuming that there ought to be a clergyman for every 1500 inhabitants, it will be seen that 112 clergymen are at this moment required for the province of Upper Canada. But it is to be remarked that these 1500 inhabitants are commonly scattered over a surface of several hundred square miles, and that if confined to this number, every clergyman must, to be useful, itinerate, and have many places of worship to attend. Under such circumstances all the advantages of a sedentary and established clergy cannot be enjoyed. Even if one clergyman were settled in every township, of which there are already 260, his labours would be great, for these townships or parishes are commonly twelve by nine miles, containing more than 100 square miles, and consequently equal in extent to eight or ten parishes in this country.

Again, the rapid increase of population must be taken into consideration, which will double every fifteen or twenty years for a century to come. Now if the population in 1826 amounting to 200,000, require 112 additional clergymen, which, with the twenty-four already in the country, make in all 136, then in 1846 the population, which will at least be 400,000, will require 136 more clergymen for their religious instruction, or about seven every year. This new demand, together with the number ne-

cessary to fill up vacancies, will require during the early years of the seminary, a great and increasing number every season. The University of Upper Canada will therefore be essentially a Missionary College, and will have to furnish a greater number of candidates for Holy Orders than for any of the other professions. In this point of view it appears equally deserving of assistance with Bishop's College at Calcutta; for if the latter confine itself entirely to the religious instruction of those who are to become Missionaries, it is because there is another seminary supported by the East India Company, where laymen can acquire an academical education. In the Canada University both are combined, as sufficient endowments could not have been procured for two, but the wisdom of such separation may be well questioned, when it is considered that young men aspiring to the sacred profession are frequently a check upon their companions studying for other purposes, and are found exerting over them an indirect moral influence of the greatest advantage. Considering, therefore, this institution in the light of a Missionary seminary, and the great want of clergymen in Upper Canada, it must be manifest to every one that to put it into immediate operation is of the most essential consequence; and as his Majesty's government has done so well, it is not perhaps too much to expect from the friends of pure religion the assistance necessary for supporting the institution till the endowments become

available. For this purpose six or seven thousand pounds would be sufficient, a sum not exceeding what was collected by the American Bishops and their friends two years ago. It is not for the purpose of censuring the benevolence of my countrymen to the Sister Church in the United States that I recal the visit of Bishops Hobart and Chase to remembrance, but to shew that the case of Upper Canada, even if it were not an integral part of the empire and inhabited by fellow-subjects and belonging to the same church, is much stronger than that of Ohio. In his appeal to the British Public, Bishop Chase detailed, with much truth, the many privations to which he and his clergy were exposed, and the difficulties and dangers which they had to encounter in disseminating religion through their diocese. To this affectionate appeal the hearts of the religious instantly opened, and the Venerable Bishop returned in triumph with ample means for establishing a seminary for bringing up young men to the ministry of the sacred word and ordinances. The writer of this paper is confident that the money thus bestowed will be appropriated in the most judicious and disinterested manner to promote the great object for which it was given, and that it will yield a rich harvest both here and hereafter to the generous donors. But he confidently appeals to the same benevolence for like assistance in a case of still greater necessity. For no person can fail to perceive that our Missionaries in Upper Canada are

exposed to greater hardships and privations than can possibly be met with in the state of Ohio. Upper Canada is 560 miles long, Ohio only 200, their breadth is I believe nearly equal. The population of Upper Canada scattered over this immense country amounts to 200,000, that of Ohio to 800,000 \*, or four times the number settled in a country not perhaps one quarter the area, thus making the population in Ohio about sixteen times more dense than in Upper Canada. For every person that a missionary meets travelling through the woods in the British province, he will meet sixteen travelling in Ohio, and consequently the roads are proportionably better. There are not in Upper Canada four persons to a square mile, in Ohio upwards of forty. The difference of wealth is perhaps still greater, because many of the inhabitants of Ohio are emigrants from the neighbouring states who frequently bring with them large capitals; whereas Upper Canada since its first establishment has continued the asylum of the poor and destitute. First, the refugee loyalists, who sacrificed every thing for their king and country; next, discharged soldiers, who if not settled there would have become a burthen on this country; and now, since the general peace, it is filling with paupers from the United Kingdom, by which vast sums are annually saved which had been

\* "The population in 1826 is estimated at 800,000." See Mellish's Geography, page 340.

spent supporting them before their emigration. While, therefore, I praise the benevolence extended to Bishop Chase, I am persuaded that all his benefactors will freely admit that our claim is yet stronger, and that, if their ability allow, they will feel conscientiously bound to extend to us similar help.

When it is considered that the Canadas are capable of maintaining a population of twelve or sixteen millions, it is impossible to set limits to the influence which the University of the Upper Province, if wisely and piously directed, may acquire over this vast population—the greater portion of which may, through the Divine blessing, be brought up in the communion of the Church of England. A farther and most pressing reason for hastening the active commencement of the University will be found in the fact, that our Church in its present state may be said to be struggling for existence, attacked as she is by the Romish Church, and all the sectaries, who, though agreeing in nothing else, join in opposing her, because she is the establishment of England. We have to contend with four hundred thousand Roman Catholics in the sister province of Lower Canada, under a numerous and regular priesthood, headed by an Archbishop and four suffragans, and assisted by three Colleges; one at Quebec, one at Montreal, and one at St. Nicolet, where the different branches of an academical education, as well as theology, are taught.

The paramount influence of the Roman Catholics in Lower Canada, and their decided majority in the Legislature, render all expectations of a great increase of our Church, or of any solid improvements in educating the people, for a long time hopeless. The stream of amelioration must flow from Upper Canada, and the University must be the source of its supply. It will become the rallying point of the Protestant faith, the promoter of sound religious principles, and profitable instruction, through both provinces. Nor is there a moment to lose; for the recent emigrations from Ireland are daily adding strength to the Roman Catholics, and diminishing the comparative superiority of Protestants even in Upper Canada.

But appalling as these circumstances are, I cannot help feeling the greatest encouragement from an occurrence connected with the religious instruction of the Canadas, which is now matter of history. The first step ever taken by the Imperial Legislature towards a recognition of that obvious, but still unacknowledged principle, that the colonies of a country have as good a right to moral and religious instruction from the parent state as to her laws and government, was taken in favour of these colonies by appointing a Religious Establishment for their benefit, according to the forms and ceremonies of the Church of England.

What, indeed, are the great objects of colonization but to provide for the redundancies of popula-

tion, to afford to meritorious enterprise and industry the means and opportunity of successful exertion, to recognize and improve the unheeded and uncultivated bounties of nature, to form at intermediate points links of connection between the mother country and the remotest lands to which her commerce can be extended ; and, in addition, to direct to beneficial purposes the talents and labours of those whom the offended laws have banished from their native land. Now, these objects are beneficial to the parent state, producing settlements in the most distant regions, notwithstanding the perils of unhealthy climates and unexplored seas. And shall the various descriptions of emigrants, of which they are composed, encounter all the privations and dangers incident to the formation of such settlements for the advantage of their native land, and be, in the meantime, deprived of their most precious rights and privileges ? Surely, if they are entitled to all the comforts of a moral and religious education by remaining at home, much more ought such comforts to accompany, or as soon as possible, follow them to the remote settlements which they are employed in establishing. And if any colony can have a paramount claim over another to a privilege which is the common right of all, it is Canada, more particularly Upper Canada, which was first settled by men driven from their homes by the enemies of their country, many of whom had sacrificed to principle the means

which would have enabled them to have procured for themselves and children the benefits of moral and religious instruction.

It is to be lamented that this great country, in establishing colonies, has chiefly confined her views to pecuniary advantage, and seems entirely to have forgotten that the attachment of foreign settlements depends infinitely more upon moral and religious feeling than political arrangement or commercial profit. For it is evident that forty thousand pounds per annum, (which is scarcely the expence of a single regiment,) spent in the support of a zealous clergy in the North American colonies, would do more in producing good feeling and loyal attachment to the religious and political institutions of England than one hundred times the sum spent in any other manner. Religious instruction should be made sufficient and commensurate with the wants of the people in every part of the empire; nor should it be thought a matter of indifference in colonial policy, or even of secondary consideration. It should take the lead of all others; for to form colonies under the guidance of Christian principles is one of the noblest and most beneficial purposes which governments can fulfil; nor are the present times, we confess, without some indications that a nobler policy may at length be adopted. For the Legislature which, in 1793, considered the claims of the colonies to religious instruction as the suggestion of visionaries and fanatics, although nearly half the



empire had been lost by its neglect\*, has now sanctioned the adoption of a uniform system of religious instruction for the colonies in the East as well as in the West. And if it be followed up with energy and skill, the British empire will be established on a foundation more absolute than any which unhalloved power can hold in subjection, for it will rest on the opinions and affections of two hundred millions of men. Nor will such a policy, sublime and affecting as it is, and pregnant with tranquillity and happiness, increase the public expenditure; for as the influence of Christian principles extend, the charge for physical coercion will become less; murmurs will give way to blessings and praise; and one-fourth of the human race being thus reclaimed, the remainder will gradually follow, and thus the whole earth become the garden of the Lord.

But to return from this sublime and fascinating prospect, it may be reasonably asked by those whose aid we are soliciting, how the Clergy are to be supported in Upper Canada after they are instructed? I answer, from the produce of certain lands which have been appropriated for the maintenance of a Protestant Clergy, concerning which arrangements for making them available are now in progress;—from subscriptions by the inhabitants of the more

\* Had the Church of England been adequately supported in the Colonies, now the United States, they would have retained their allegiance.

populous districts, which may now be expected to yield something, and to increase gradually in amount;—from the sittings in the towns, which will soon be reasonably productive. Add to all this, that the young Clergymen must and will serve for some years at a very moderate allowance.

The great difficulty, therefore, which we have to encounter is a delay of five or six years in commencing our University, and the consequent increasing want of religious instruction. It has been shewn that 112 additional Clergymen are now required, and by the time that our endowments become available, 40 more will be necessary.

The friends of religion reflect that this delay is a great loss to the Household of Faith, and ought to be heard before that of the heathen, that it is our brethren who are perishing or falling away for lack of instruction. The corruption of human nature is strikingly visible in the change which frequently takes place among persons settled in the wilderness. At first they lament their distance from Churches and Schools, but by degrees such lamentations die away as well as the religious feelings from which they emanated. Living without restraint, and without the eye of those whom they respect, a sense of decency and religion frequently disappears. At length, the disinclination to holy things presents itself in all its deformity, a distaste for divine worship, and neglect of every thing sacred make their appearance, and a total

estrangement from God ensues; and although from their situation crimes against society are few, the heart becomes entirely dead to true piety and virtue. Were it not for the women, especially the mothers of families, little engaging or amiable would remain in many of the back settlements. It is in such situations that the influence of the female sex is so beautifully exemplified. To their exertions are we often to attribute all the humanity and softness that remain. The Bible, the Prayer-book, the sense of God and his providence, the blessings of a Saviour, and the hopes of immortality, are by them preserved and introduced to the notice of their children, and brought back with effect to the recollection of their husbands.

not such entitled to cry to the religious of this country, come and help us? If we rejoice in every attempt to communicate the arts, sciences, and letters, how much more ought it to be matter of joy to publish the blessings of the gospel; for however precious the arts of civilized life, and precious they must be confessed to be, they are infinitely inferior to those sublime truths which purify the affections, the heart, suggest the noblest contemplations to the mind, and determine the destiny of the human race. If, then, we believe Christianity to be what it professes, a bright emanation from heaven, the harbinger of peace and joy, love and felicity to nations, as well as individuals; if we have found from experience that it purifies and exalts our nature,

smooths the pillow of death, and opens the gates of immortality; how shall we excuse ourselves from labouring, by every means in our power, to revive its energy in the hearts of those who have been, from their unhappy situation, deprived of instruction? Nor need any fear that their bounty will become like water spilt upon dry ground. No, it will, through the blessing of God, be as good seed sown, bringing forth fifty, sixty, an hundred fold. For the young men, whom such assistance will enable us to educate, and send forth among the people in the Spirit of the Lord, will not return empty-handed. There are times when the consolations of religion are desired by every man, moments of deep affliction of heart-rending bereavements, when the weeping spirit bows to the voice of God, and at such times a pious and conscientious Clergyman cannot fail of making a deep impressi<sup>o</sup>n. And, indeed, experience proves, that wherever such a clergyman is placed, he very soon collects around him the neighbouring settlers, and forms a respectable and increasing congregation.

THE END.







